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MINUTES
CITY OF FORT COLLINS
FUTURES COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: September 12, 2016
Location: CIC Room, City Hall, 300 Laporte Ave.
Time: 4:00–6:00pm

Committee Members Present:

Wade Troxell, Chair
Gino Campana
Kristin Stephens

City Staff:

Jeff Mihelich, Deputy City Manager
Darin Atteberry, City Manager
Jacqueline Kozak-Thiel, Chief Sustainability Officer
Dianne Tjalkens, Admin/Board Support
Lindsay Ex, Environmental Program Manager
Lucinda Smith, Environmental Services Director
Daylan Figgs, Environmental Program Manager
Wendy Williams, Assistant City Manager
Sam Houghteling, Economic Health Analyst
Michelle Provaznik, Manager of Gardens on Spring Creek
Katie Ricketts, Economic Health Analyst

Invited Guests:

Zia Zybko, Poudre Valley Community Farms
Seth Jansen, Poudre Valley Community Farm
George Wallace, CSU and Larimer County Agriculture Advisory Board
Nic Koontz, Native Hill Farm
Elizabeth Mozer, LoCo Food Distribution
Danielle Bock, Greeley Schools
Martha Sullins, Colorado State University Extension
Kristin Kirkpatrick, The Kitchen Community
Josh Greene, Foodbank for Larimer County

Community Members:

Kevin Jones, Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce
Dale Adamy, citizen
Libby Christensen, CSU
Brad Chistensen, Northern Colorado Food Cluster
Ben Mozer, Lyric Cinema Café
Katherine Zybco
Gailmarie Kimmel, Poudre Valley Community Farms
Kevin Cody, University of Northern Colorado
Martha Sullins, CSU

Wade Troxell called meeting to order at 4:02pm

Approval of Minutes:

Gino moved to approve the August minutes as presented. Kristin seconded. Motion passed unanimously, 3-0-0.

Think Tank Item 9-2016: Fort Collins Food System Panel

What urban agriculture will look like in 30-50 years. According to *Shrinking the Earth*, resources are the building blocks of a sustainable system. Land and water resources should be allocated for food production. Larimer County will double in population by 2060. Need to attract creative class, live resiliently with more people, and access healthy, resilient food sources. Limited land and high demand. Urban ag is local food system which provides food consumed by citizens of the city. Protect land surrounding the city for urban ag—many cobenefits to environment. If think of local food as utility, can form partnerships, create infrastructure, etc. 2046 Vision: Have not lost any more acres of farmland, enjoy abundant/diverse selection, availability, children know where food comes from, every school has a garden, all farms in City and around perimeter saved, working farm park, connections to history, special character places. Create incentives to build up, not out—ADUs, density, etc. To provide water for doubled population, continue partnerships with PSD and CSU for water conservation education. Plant native pollinator habitats, low water use landscaping, expand grey water use, use low impact design, smart irrigation, and treat human waste as a resource. Give farmers access to water through water leasing agreements. Prioritize water and land for food production.

Seth: Panelists will elaborate on food future vision through Q&A.

Q: Future home for Native Hill Farm?

- Nic: Have been in a long/ongoing search for long term secure land lease. Short term and longer term leases, piecing together as first generation farmer. Will only get more difficult. Land, water and people are most important assets for farm that serves Fort Collins residents. Talking to Open Spaces and Natural Areas around trajectory of open spaces, including leases for food production. Food producing land should be community owned, like a utility. Land should remain food producing asset beyond his career. Preserve land within and near GMA boundaries. Current farm land is community buffer between Laporte and Fort Collins. But, land is not usable without water. This farm grows year round—need a little water all the time. City can support food system through community market places, incentives, continue existing support of nonprofit projects that support food system. Farms create jobs.

Q: What can City do to help with water?

- George: Represent traditional ag outside the city. Must consider farms within reasonable distance from town as well. Urban ag is interdependent and linked; systems are connected. Benefits of irrigated ag—local production reduces carbon footprint, economic benefit of renewable resources, recharges ground water, absorbs flood surge, provides wildlife habitat, wetlands, potential for water sharing, buffers, etc. Predecessors invested in reservoirs, canals, ditches which serve domestic and ag uses. Dismantling system by buying water for urban needs. Changing decrees is expensive, takes time in court—look at alternative transfer methods. State plan says to look at alternative transfer methods. In '90s a lot of ag water passed to cities and districts. Farms own water but depend on rental water as well. What the City can do: 1. Extreme dependency on rental water—don't change ag decrees, preserve water for ag. Encourage special districts to do the same thing. 2. Extreme emergencies—try new things to share water. Black water from High

Park fire was hard to treat. Farms took that water, saved City millions. 3. Pilot some of agreements that are available: Natural Areas can add ag to purchase portfolio; secure farms, with easement, and lease to farmers with caveat that water can be used in emergency. 4. Inventory parcels and water rights to earmark for discretionary purchase through co-ops or government. 5. Ask developers for cash in lieu of water rights. Water banking—purchase rights. 6. Renew support for Halligan, which adjudicates additional water for ag, and gives vessel for water sharing with delivery year-round. 7. Add an ag rep to the Water Advisory Board.



Q: What are resources that can be leveraged for training producers?

- Martha: Not just financial resources, but partnerships, educational resources, etc. Train new producers, retention (losing smaller scale farmers), expand market for local food. Federal level—grant opportunities available. City could be at forefront of regional partnerships. Make investments in smaller scale—need processing and holding facilities, etc. that support larger scale purchasing (wholesale and to institutions). Create broader group of consumers and scale up markets. USDA is investing in producer training. Focus on developing sound business plan. Incubator farms—institute can provide resources; mentorships with existing farmers; educational institutions including UNC. Creating access for lower income individuals and families. Alternative resource use—working with Denver on recycled water use. Consider how we can use greywater in food production—safe and lower cost. Partner regionally and statewide.

Q: Strategies to get local food at large scale?

- Danielle: Greeley schools serve 18K meals/day. Leverage money available to create infrastructure. Greeley built central production kitchen with grant funds. Most institutions only have heat and serve equipment. Ex 1: Bean burritos: get pinto beans from small family farm (Leffler) in Eaton. Diversified business model. Find partners who want to diversify. Have guaranteed sales. Takes five years to change the palette of a child. Ex 2: Mirepoix (onions, garlic, carrots, celery)—use in most of items cooked from scratch. Red sauce from scratch used for pasta, pot roast, pizza, etc. Can get everything needed for mirepoix cheaper from US Foods than direct from local farmer. Need to keep users and producers talking. Cannot source enough locally. Build bridges with local producers—put money back into local economy. Will spend \$2.4M this year. Need to educate producers on how to respond to bids.

Q: Distribution, opportunities to expand the market?

- Elizabeth: Relationship building and maintenance. There is growing demand for local product from grocery stores, institutions, etc. These are some of most important buyers. Have to integrate into existing food system. Will not stop going to grocery stores, schools, etc. Bridge the gap—bring to mainstream market. Help smaller growers by aggregating processing. Have a geographically centered food hub for processing, distribution, and scaling up. Farm services, products for farmers, set aside space. Will continue to see growth in demand across the spectrum.

Q: Neighborhood aspect of food production/distribution?

- Zia: Used to have sugar beet and pickle factories. Need infrastructure/hub. The Source (Denver) has butcher, cheese, coffee, etc. Small restaurants, big restaurant, living spaces, composting, education, involve nonprofits, etc.

Q: How do you drive benefits to lower income households/provide access for everyone?

- Josh: Food Bank is distributing more food than ever. Expect to double in 30 years. Gap analysis found someone coming for food from nearly every street in Fort Collins—not an isolated problem. 1/3 kids faces food insecurity. Food Bank distributes food for free. Josh's job is to get the food. Manufacturing has become more efficient, test products not done as much, ugly food movement—all mean less food coming to Food Bank. Food Bank channels food that would otherwise be wasted to people. Waste percentage under

2%. Donators get tax incentives. National sources are shaky and expensive. Have partnership with local farmers. Aim to distribute 50% fresh produce. In collaboration with Gardens on Spring Creek met Plant it Forward goal. Collected produce from home growers. As local food economy grows and stabilizes, Food Bank is great clearing house for items that cannot be sold elsewhere.



Q: Policy opportunities, compared to other municipalities?

- Kristin: Have award winning projects in private sector, food cluster, nonprofits, etc. But the City is in charge of things outside entities cannot do. City can elevate food culture through infrastructure support. New food economy—amazing innovation, creation of jobs, supply chain, resiliency. Indirect benefit of attracting creative class. Have local food scene and beer scene—people want to come to here. Food policy is economic, environmental, transportation, health policy, CAP, social sustainability. Have several food deserts in Fort Collins. City can determine how to provide access. Transportation is a huge barrier. Pressure of housing market, childcare costs. Farmers markets should not just be for affluent people. Peer cities are incentivizing corner markets, mobile food trucks. Opportunities in public land acquisition. Inventorying and strategically investing for food production are paramount to attaining vision. Growing rapidly; window for action is short. Elevate as priority. Positioned for regional leadership role. Connection to health and environmental stewardship when children are connected to their food system. City Plan is opportunity for policy changes.

Discussion

- What is the food system panel? Brought together for this meeting?
 - Yes. Invited experts that represent pieces of the system.
- City is limited in what it can do. Really get movement when everyone is working together— opportunities for partnership/alignment. Cluster model isn't just an industry group, but pulls together to find opportunities. Weld County is second in US for agriculture. FoCo Café plays role as well. Keep the discussion going. City can convene and place some funding in certain areas. Council has discussed Mountain Vista subarea plan that focuses on urban ag.
- Happy to hear food-for-all message. “Food scene” is an affluent concept—coolness, rather than nourishment. Work to do to bring that culture to everyone. Not all families have the luxury to go to the farmers market. Appreciate Food Bank’s efforts to bring in fresh foods. Easier to get canned foods. Children’s health, wellbeing and educational opportunities dependent on healthy food. Can we produce all the food we need organically, or do we need variations?
 - Believe we can. Must choose to value that and look at eating habits. Higher on food chain you eat, the more land is needed. 3 acres produces tremendous amounts of food. Balancing with growing fancy products for restaurants. Will continue to see organic and conventional farms.
- Can we get organic affordably enough to sell to a school district? What is feasibility?
 - Constituents will need to ask for organic foods in schools and raise amount of money per meal.
 - Invite participation from farmers.
 - Economy of scale. Difference between Weld and PSD is participation rates. In PSD, do they pack lunch or buy lunch at school? In Greeley student can get better quality lunch cheaper than packing a lunch. Consumer demand.
- Identifying land for production and processing. Buffer/open space areas. Places we’d be better off farming than building. Wider community discussion about what to do with little land that is left. People who want houses, affordable housing, open space, transportation, land for food, etc.—many options/competing interests. Need to have conversations now.

Do we bank land for food? Shared value? Does that take away from other needs, like affordable housing? Need to know what community wants.



- Food deserts?
 - Defined as access within a certain area, and/or access with transportation. Desert is no access within reasonable distance.
 - Identified desert to determine where to put Kids Café?
 - Yes, and worked with partners. Gaps analysis looks for areas of highest need. Want to get food to those places. Rising need in seniors, kids, and those without transportation. Looking at mobile food banks.
- Anyone know of federal/state partnerships to do land bank for urban ag?
 - Don't know of federal programs, but some communities are doing land trusts. Getting requests at Poudre Valley Community Farms for information on what it is doing.
 - Funding for easements but not for purchasing land.
 - USDA does grants to producers, which could include land acquisition.
- Historic structure has served us well, but now seeing drivers for fundamentally different system. Opportunity for innovation. Transition to urban ag vision. Fortunate with food systems we do have in Fort Collins. Aquaponics, niches, leveraging technology.
- Many City leaders in attendance at this meeting. Valuable conversation. Think City can create ecosystem to accomplish what discussing, but not get into business of urban ag as a city government. Opportunity in City Plan—can do better than last time. Can look at land use code, community ag land fees, credits for urban ag (density credit, etc.). People are one of biggest challenges. Can brand Fort Collins more toward food. Have money in budget for small videos. Holding and processing facilities—have been discussing for years. PSD has small facility for that. Have to be careful getting into that business as government, but can create incentive. Add food economy to beer economy—adds to ability to attract and retain workers. Mountain Vista subarea plan is great example with good support. City can continue to convene, collaborate, and build on system. Challenges in seasonality. Thinking about early processing and storage. Restrictions on price and quality for large scale institutions. Need to work on value of buying local and putting less emphasis on competitive price.
- Ideas for Part 2 Food System conversation: Continue to celebrate ag heritage of Fort Collins; new southeast park will have orchard, harvest table, community garden, etc.; City Plan is opportunity to get into policy level. Also think about existing and new Natural Areas—can we set some aside for ag production? Residents may be willing to be taxed to bring farms to buffers. Is there connection between urban ag and Nature in the City? Have land bank for affordable housing—can we have land bank for ag?
 - How do we amp up sense of urgency in face of huge market forces?
 - Invest in farmers who are here. Incentives and support. Asking food producers to take a lot of risk.
 - Not a personal economic upside to food production. Only making a living.
 - Sense of urgency, but balancing act with all other asks in community. Takes time in public sector.
 - Addressing use of ditch system and water rights. There are complementary discussions ongoing.
- Share manifesto with Planning office.

DO: Next Steps

- City as convener, collaborator, facilitator.
- Facilitating food economy and ecosystem.

- Culture of food, with ag heritage.
- Land/water/people
 - Inventory land and water
 - City Plan, and integration with other planning efforts
 - Water innovation
 - Nexus of ag/energy/water
 - Support of food cluster
 - Partnerships—regional and systems approach
- Part of City brand/identity

ACTION ITEMS: Jackie will share film on urban ag the City did. Will also share draft minutes with panel via email.

Future Agenda Items

- October: Energy Futures
 - November: Community Architecture
 - December: Resilient Infrastructure
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Meeting adjourned at 5:43pm.